



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS

SUCCESS STORY

Minister Provides Answers at Agricultural Processing General Assembly



Minister Nogoyev Discusses Issues with USAID and AgLinks Staff



Minister Nogoyev and a Question and Answer Session at the AFVE General Assembly

The Minister for Agriculture, Water Resources, and Processing Industries, Honorable Arstanbek Nogoyev, addressed the annual General Assembly of the Association of Fruit and Vegetable Entrepreneurs (AFVE) in Kyrgyzstan during mid-March 2008. USAID's Regional Agricultural Linkages (AgLinks) project in Kyrgyzstan co-sponsored the two-day General Assembly meeting of the AFVE. He addressed the concerns of the assembly with a 90 minute question and answer session to the delight of the association membership. The Minister was also accompanied by the Governor of Issy-Kul Region and the head of the Ministry's Department of Irrigation. The Minister expressed keen interest to support processors and producers and will explore options such as improving processor access to productive land, improving animal breeding through artificial insemination, and revising the veterinary code.

Roughly 70 people were invited to attend this year's meeting with the majority from the private sector (70%) and the remaining represented by donor projects and programs (21%) and government officials (9%). Six dairy processors also attended at the request of AgLinks as dairy sector actors have been trying to organize their own association and could draw lessons from the 4 year experience of the AFVE. The dairy sector representatives announced at the meeting they had recently received their registration and charter approval from the Ministry of Justice and were now officially organized as the Dairy Union.

The AFVE new 4 year strategic plan and 2008 Action Plan were debated and approved by the members. The strategic plan calls for greater emphasis on food safety through ISO 22000 standards (combining ISO 9001 quality management and HACCP food safety principles), increased support to the "Taste of the Sun" joint brand, closer ties to stable farmer supply chains and improved awareness of available and potential financial products. The latter was the subject of a 4-day Rural Agricultural Finance (RAF) workshop co-sponsored by USAID's CAMFA II (Central Asian Microfinance Alliance II) and AgLinks projects held immediately following the General Assembly.